

**The Nashville Number System:  
A Pop(ular) Alternative to  
Roman Numerals and Figured Bass**

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KEY OF E

$\frac{4}{4}$  ♩ = 116

# STREETS OF BALTIMORE

(BOBBY BARE)

W/HARPSICHORD LEAD-IN

IN) 1 1 1 1

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VR) 1 4 1 4  
5 5 1 1

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VR) 1 4 1 4  
5 5 1 1

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BR) 5 5 1 1  
1 1 1 5 5

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VR) 1 4 1 4  
5 5 1 1

VR) 1 4 1 4  
5 5 1 1

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VR) 1 4 1 4  
5 5 1 1

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SPOKEN VOCAL

BR) 5 5 1 1  
1 1 1 5 5

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VR) 1 4 1 4  
5 5 1 1

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TAG) 5 5 1 1

# “Long Time Gone” (Dixie Chicks, 2002)

## Transcription in Neal 2007

### Introduction [D Major] (time 0:00)

|   |   |   |               |
|---|---|---|---------------|
| I | I | I | <u>IV I V</u> |
| V | V | V | I             |
| I | I | I | <u>IV I V</u> |
| V | V | V | I             |

### Verse 1 [D Major] (0:24)

|   |   |   |               |
|---|---|---|---------------|
| I | I | I | <u>IV I V</u> |
| V | V | V | I             |
| I | I | I | <u>IV I V</u> |
| V | V | V | I             |

### Chorus 1 [D Major] (0:46)

|                        |    |             |   |                       |
|------------------------|----|-------------|---|-----------------------|
| <u>IV I</u>            | V  | <u>IV I</u> | V | <i>phrase overlap</i> |
| <u>V I<sup>6</sup></u> | IV | V           | I |                       |

### Instrumental Interlude 1 [D Major] (0:56)

|          |   |   |               |
|----------|---|---|---------------|
| <u>I</u> | I | I | <u>IV I V</u> |
| V        | V | V | I             |

### Verse 2 [D Major] (1:07)

|   |   |   |               |
|---|---|---|---------------|
| I | I | I | <u>IV I V</u> |
| V | V | V | I             |
| I | I | I | <u>IV I V</u> |
| V | V | V | I             |

### Chorus 2 [D Major] (1:30)

|                        |    |             |   |                                    |
|------------------------|----|-------------|---|------------------------------------|
| <u>IV I</u>            | V  | <u>IV I</u> | V | <i>direct modulation up 1 step</i> |
| <u>V I<sup>6</sup></u> | IV | V           | I |                                    |

### Instrumental Interlude 2 [E Major] (1:42)

|   |   |   |               |
|---|---|---|---------------|
| I | I | I | <u>IV I V</u> |
| V | V | V | I             |
| I | I | I | <u>IV I V</u> |
| V | V | V | I             |

### Bridge [modulatory] (2:04)

|                       |                                                   |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <u><sup>b</sup>VI</u> | <i>(pivot modulation from E Major to G Major)</i> |
| <u>IV</u>             | <u>IV</u> <u>V</u> <u><sup>b</sup>VI</u>          |

|                       |                                                                     |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>IV</u>             | <i>(pivot modulation back from G Major to E Major)</i>              |
| <u><sup>b</sup>VI</u> | <u><sup>b</sup>VI</u> <u><sup>b</sup>VII</u> <u><sup>b</sup>VII</u> |

|                       |                                                       |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>I</u>              | <i>(circle-of-fifths progression back to D Major)</i> |
| <u>II<sup>#</sup></u> | <u>II<sup>#</sup></u> <u>V</u> <u>V</u>               |

### Verse 3 [D Major] (2:21)

|   |   |   |               |
|---|---|---|---------------|
| I | I | I | <u>IV I V</u> |
| V | V | V | I             |
| I | I | I | <u>IV I V</u> |
| V | V | V | I             |

### Chorus 3 (expanded) [D Major] (2:44)

|                        |    |             |                                |
|------------------------|----|-------------|--------------------------------|
| <u>IV I</u>            | V  | <u>IV I</u> | V                              |
| <u>V I<sup>6</sup></u> | IV | V           |                                |
| IV I                   | V  | <u>IV I</u> | V                              |
| <u>V I<sup>6</sup></u> | IV | V           | <u>I</u> <i>phrase overlap</i> |

### Instrumental Interlude 3 [D Major] (3:03)

|          |   |   |               |
|----------|---|---|---------------|
| <u>I</u> | I | I | <u>IV I V</u> |
| V        | V | V | I             |

### Vocal Outro [D Major] (3:15)

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | I | I | V |
| V | V | V | I |
| I | I | I | V |
| V | V | V | I |
| I | I | I | V |
| V | V | V | I |

### Instrumental Outro [D Major] (3:48)

|   |   |   |               |
|---|---|---|---------------|
| I | I | I | <u>IV I V</u> |
| V | V | V | I             |

# “Long Time Gone” (Dixie Chicks, 2002)

Transcription in Neal 2007

## Verse 1 [D Major] (0:24)

|   |   |   |               |
|---|---|---|---------------|
| I | I | I | <u>IV I V</u> |
| V | V | V | I             |
| I | I | I | <u>IV I V</u> |
| V | V | V | I             |

## Chorus 1 [D Major] (0:46)

|                        |    |             |          |                           |
|------------------------|----|-------------|----------|---------------------------|
| <u>IV I</u>            | V  | <u>IV I</u> | V        | <i>phrase<br/>overlap</i> |
| <u>V I<sup>6</sup></u> | IV | V           | <u>I</u> |                           |

## Instrumental Interlude 1 [D Major] (0:56)

|          |   |   |               |
|----------|---|---|---------------|
| <u>I</u> | I | I | <u>IV I V</u> |
| V        | V | V | I             |

# “Long Time Gone” (Dixie Chicks, 2002)

Transcription in Neal 2007

|     |   |   |   |                                                              |
|-----|---|---|---|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| VR) | 1 | 1 | 1 | $\leq \overset{\sim}{4} \overset{\sim}{1} \overset{\sim}{5}$ |
|     | 5 | 5 | 5 | <u>1</u>                                                     |
|     | 1 | 1 | 1 | $\leq \overset{\sim}{4} \overset{\sim}{1} \overset{\sim}{5}$ |
|     | 5 | 5 | 5 | <u>1</u>                                                     |

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|     |                                       |   |                                       |   |
|-----|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| CH) | $\overset{\sim}{4} \overset{\sim}{1}$ | 5 | $\overset{\sim}{4} \overset{\sim}{1}$ | 5 |
|     | <u><math>5 \frac{1}{3}</math></u>     | 4 | 5                                     |   |

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|     |   |   |   |                                                              |
|-----|---|---|---|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| LN) | 1 | 1 | 1 | $\leq \overset{\sim}{4} \overset{\sim}{1} \overset{\sim}{5}$ |
|     | 5 | 5 | 5 | <u>1</u>                                                     |

# Nashville Numbers are Pop Symbols with note names converted to scale degrees

For example, in the **Key of D**:

| Pop<br>Symbol    | Roman<br>Numeral | Nashville<br>Number |
|------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Bm <sup>9</sup>  | vi <sup>9</sup>  | 6- <sup>9</sup>     |
| A/C <sup>#</sup> | V <sup>6</sup>   | $\frac{5}{7}$       |

# Nashville Numbers are Pop Symbols with note names converted to scale degrees

For example, in the **Key of D**:

| Pop<br>Symbol                  | Roman<br>Numeral            | Nashville<br>Number      |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| A <sup>7</sup> /C <sup>♯</sup> | V <sup>6</sup> <sub>5</sub> | 5 <sup>7</sup><br>—<br>7 |

# Nashville Numbers are Pop Symbols with note names converted to scale degrees

For example, in the **Key of D**:

| Pop<br>Symbol                  | Roman<br>Numeral              | Nashville<br>Number      |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| A <sup>9</sup> /C <sup>#</sup> | V <sup>7</sup> <sub>6</sub> ? | 5 <sup>9</sup><br>-<br>7 |



# Nashville Numbers are Pop Symbols with note names converted to scale degrees

For example, in the **Key of D**:

| Pop<br>Symbol                 | Roman<br>Numeral              | Nashville<br>Number |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| A <sub>sus</sub> <sup>4</sup> | V <sup>4</sup>                | 5 <sup>4</sup>      |
| A <sub>add</sub> <sup>6</sup> | V <sub>add</sub> <sup>6</sup> | 5 <sup>6</sup>      |

# Nashville Numbers are Pop Symbols with note names converted to scale degrees

For example, in the **Key of D**:

| Pop<br>Symbol | Roman<br>Numeral            | Nashville<br>Number |
|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| A/E           | V <sup>6</sup> <sub>4</sub> | 5<br>—<br>2         |
| D/A           | I <sup>6</sup> <sub>4</sub> | 1<br>—<br>5         |

# Nashville Numbers are Pop Symbols with note names converted to scale degrees

For example, in the **Key of D**:

| Pop<br>Symbol | Roman<br>Numeral | Nashville<br>Number |
|---------------|------------------|---------------------|
| A/E           | $V_4^6$          | $\frac{5}{2}$       |
| D/A           | $V_4^6$          | $5_4^6$             |

# “Versace on the Floor”

## (Bruno Mars, 2016)

KEY OF D

$\frac{4}{4}$  @  $\text{♩} = 87$

### VERSACE ON THE FLOOR

(BRUNO MARS)

PIANO/VOX ONLY (CHORDS HELD)

VR)  $1^2$   $3^-$   $4$   $\underline{4 \ 5}$

$1$   $3^-$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $\underline{4^{\Delta 7} \ 4 \ 5}$

$\frac{5^-}{b7}$   $6^7$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $4^-6$

$2^-$   $6^-$   $5^4$   $5$

PCR)  $4^{\Delta 9}$   $\frac{5}{4}$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $\underline{\overset{..}{5}^- \ \overset{.}{1}^7 \ \overset{.}{3}^{\Delta 7}}$

$4^{\Delta 7}$   $\underline{3^- \ ^b6^{\frac{9}{4-3}}}$

$\underline{2^- \ 3^-}$   $\underline{4^{\Delta 7} \ 5^{\frac{6-5}{4}}}$

BAND IN

CH)  $1$   $3^-$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $\underline{4^{\Delta 7} \ ^c5}$

$1$   $3^-$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $\underline{4^{\Delta 7} \ ^c5}$

VR)  $1^2$   $3^-$   $4$   $\underline{4 \ 5}$

$1$   $3^-$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $\underline{4^{\Delta 7} \ 4 \ 5}$

$\frac{5^-}{b7}$   $6^7$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $4^-6$

$2^-$   $6^-$   $5^4$   $\underline{\overset{...}{5} \ 1}$

PCR)  $4^{\Delta 9}$   $\frac{5}{4}$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $\underline{\overset{..}{5}^- \ \overset{.}{1}^7 \ \overset{.}{3}^{\Delta 7}}$

$4^{\Delta 7}$   $\underline{3^- \ ^b6^{\frac{9}{4-3}}}$

$\underline{2^- \ 3^-}$   $\underline{4^{\Delta 7} \ 5^{\frac{6-5}{4}}}$

CH)  $1^2$   $3^-$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $\underline{4^{\Delta 7} \ ^c5}$

$1^2$   $3^-$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $\underline{4^{\Delta 7} \ ^c5}$

SO)  $4^{\Delta 7}$   $5$   $6^-$   $\underline{\overset{..}{5}^7 \ \overset{.}{1} \ \overset{.}{1}^{\frac{1}{3}}}$

$2^-$   $5^{4-3}$   $^b6^{\Delta 7}$   $\underline{5^{\frac{9}{4}} \ ^b6^{\frac{9}{4}}}$

→ MOD. UP A HALF STEP

BR)  $4^{\Delta 7}$   $\frac{5}{4}$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $\underline{\overset{..}{5}^7 \ \overset{.}{3}^- \ \overset{.}{6}^-}$

$2^-$   $6^-$   $4$   $4^{\Delta 7}$

CH)  $1$   $3^-$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $\underline{4^{\Delta 7} \ ^c5}$

$1$   $3^-$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $\underline{4^{\Delta 7} \ ^c5}$

$^b6^{\Delta 7}$   $1^-9$   $^b2^{\Delta 9}$

# “Versace on the Floor” (Bruno Mars, 2016)

VR)  $1^2$   $3^-7$   $4$   $4$   $5$

$1$   $3^-7$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $4$   $5$

$\frac{5^-}{b7}$   $6^7$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $4^-6$

$2^-7$   $6^-$   $5^4$   $5$

---

PCR)  $4^{\Delta 9}$   $\frac{5}{4}$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $5^-7$   $1_6^7$   $3^{\emptyset 7}$

$4^{\Delta 7}$   $3^-7$   $6_{4-3}^9$

$2^-7$   $3^-7$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $5_{4-5}^{6-5}$

---

BAND IN

CH)  $1$   $3^-7$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $5$

$1$   $3^-7$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $5$

PCR)  $4^{\Delta 9}$   $\frac{5}{4}$   $4^{\Delta 7}$

$4^{\Delta 7}$   $3^-7$   $6_{4-3}^9$

$2^-7$   $3^-7$   $4^{\Delta 7}$   $5$

---

CH)  $1^2$   $3^-7$   $4$

$1^2$   $3^-7$   $4$

---

SO)  $4^{\Delta 7}$   $5$   $6$

$2^-7$   $5^{4-3}$   $b$

---

→ MOD. UP A HALF ST

BR)  $4^{\Delta 7}$   $\frac{5}{4}$   $4^{\Delta 7}$

$2^-$   $6^-$   $4$

# Nashville Numbers are Pop Symbols with note names converted to scale degrees

For example, in the **Key of D**:

| Pop<br>Symbol     | Roman<br>Numeral | Nashville<br>Number |
|-------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| A <sup>7</sup>    | V <sup>7</sup>   | 5 <sup>7</sup>      |
| G <sup>maj7</sup> | IV <sup>7</sup>  | 4 <sup>Δ7</sup>     |

# Nashville Numbers are Pop Symbols with note names converted to scale degrees

For example, in the **Key of D**:

| Pop<br>Symbol  | Roman<br>Numeral     | Nashville<br>Number |
|----------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| D <sup>7</sup> | V <sup>7</sup> /IV   | 1 <sup>7</sup>      |
| G <sup>7</sup> | IV <sup>dom7</sup> ? | 4 <sup>7</sup>      |

# Nashville Numbers are Pop Symbols with note names converted to scale degrees

For example, in the **Key of D**:

| Pop<br>Symbol  | Roman<br>Numeral   | Nashville<br>Number |
|----------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| E <sup>7</sup> | V <sup>7</sup> /V  | 2 <sup>7</sup>      |
| B <sup>7</sup> | V <sup>7</sup> /ii | 6 <sup>7</sup>      |



# Nashville Numbers are Pop Symbols with note names converted to scale degrees

For example, in the **Key of D**:

| Pop<br>Symbol     | Roman<br>Numeral | Nashville<br>Number  |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| C <sup>7</sup>    | ???              | b7 <sup>7</sup>      |
| C <sup>9</sup> /E | ???              | b7 <sup>9</sup><br>2 |

# Nashville Numbers are Pop Symbols with note names converted to scale degrees

For example, in the **Key of D**:

| Pop<br>Symbol | Roman<br>Numeral | Nashville<br>Number |
|---------------|------------------|---------------------|
| G/A           | $\frac{IV}{5}$   | $\frac{4}{5}$       |

**“As Good As I Once Was” (Toby Keith, 2005)**

# **YOUR TURN!**

- **16-bar Chorus**
- **8-bar Bridge**

# “As Good As I Once Was” (Toby Keith, 2005)

|     |    |               |                |    |   |    |   |                 |                |
|-----|----|---------------|----------------|----|---|----|---|-----------------|----------------|
| [C] | 4  | 5             | 1              | 1  | . | 4  | 5 | 1               | 1              |
|     | 4  | 5             | $1\frac{5}{7}$ | 6- | . | 2- | 5 | $4\frac{1}{3}$  | $2\frac{7}{8}$ |
|     |    |               |                |    |   |    |   | $5\cdot5\cdot5$ |                |
| [B] | b7 | $\frac{4}{6}$ | 1              | 1  | . | 2  | 2 | 5               | $5\frac{7}{8}$ |
|     |    |               |                |    |   |    |   | Rit—            |                |

\* Chart by Chas Williams (2017)

# QUESTIONS, COMMENTS?

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